

American Academy of Pediatrics – Project Update

(A representative from the American Academy of Pediatrics was unable to attend, however, the following summary of the Academy's activities was shared.)

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is a not-for-profit professional membership organization committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. Founded in 1930 by 35 pediatricians, the AAP now has approximately 55,000 members. Members include pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists. More than 34,000 members are board-certified and called Fellows of the American Academy of Pediatrics (FAAP). Current AAP goals focus on developing policy and programs in five specific areas: advocacy, education, research, service, and improving the systems through which pediatric care is delivered.

Through its Committee on Pediatric AIDS, the Academy has issued several policy statements to its members covering such topics as perinatal HIV infection and testing, HIV transmission through breast-feeding, education of children with HIV, and evaluation and medical treatment of the HIV-exposed infant. All policy statements are available on the Academy website www.aap.org (Click on the *Professional Education* button).

Raising Member Awareness

The AAP believes that pediatricians play an essential role in the further reduction of perinatal HIV transmission. Through this cooperative agreement, the Academy has aimed to address further reduction in the rate of perinatal HIV transmission through the education of pediatricians and through collaborative work with other professional organizations.

Notably, the Academy has been involved in the following activities:

- A special “Perinatal HIV Prevention” insert in the AAP’s standard batch mailing. The insert included a cover letter highlighting the importance of pediatrician involvement, three patient education brochures, a poster from the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (PAF) and a fact sheet on the issue.
- A reprint of the Executive Summary from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Report, *Reducing the Odds: Preventing Perinatal Transmission of HIV in the United States*, in the Academy’s news magazine, *AAP News*.
- Promotion of the joint AAP/ American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) policy statement, “Human Immunodeficiency Virus Screening.”
- Working collaboratively with health care organizations to discuss quality assurance measures as a tool for changing physician behaviors.

Evaluation and Next Steps

A Periodic Survey of AAP Fellows was initiated by the Committee on Pediatric AIDS to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of AAP members regarding HIV screening as a means to reduce perinatal HIV transmission. The survey explored pediatrician's awareness of the HIV status of mothers of newborns, counseling practices regarding the need for HIV screening when HIV status is unknown, and opinion of universal HIV testing of pregnant women as a component of prenatal care. Findings from the survey are being analyzed and will be used to develop programs and other mechanisms for continuing to educate members of the AAP in an effort to affect behavior change.

Materials Available

- AAP patient education brochure, *Know the Facts About HIV and AIDS*
- AAP *Fact Sheet* on perinatal HIV transmission
- AAP Committee on Pediatric AIDS policy statements / technical reports

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